

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Jeremy Williams, and I am a student at Yale University.

I stand in support of HB 6616 and the effort to expand access to HUSKY regardless of immigration status and age. If Connecticut wants a future that includes healthy families and a stable, thriving, and growing workforce that is ready to meet the needs of our future, Connecticut must ensure that these individuals have access to health coverage. Expanding access to HUSKY is an important step towards this future.

Although undocumented immigrants pay over half a billion dollars in taxes annually, they are barred from accessing the very programs their taxes fund, such as HUSKY. A majority of the 113,000 undocumented immigrants in CT (58%) are uninsured compared to the mere 5.9% for the rest of CT. Increasing access to healthcare would greatly improve health outcomes for undocumented immigrants in all aspects: fewer premature deaths, improvements in overall self-reported care, improved mental health and lower stress, and better management of chronic conditions. According to the National Commission on Prevention Policies, 100,000 deaths could be averted each year just by improving the delivery of five preventive services.

As someone whose parent struggled to pay for healthcare when she worked temp jobs, I know the strain that healthcare can place on families, especially those who are less economically secure than mine was. Expanding access to HUSKY would not just be the morally right thing to do, but the humane thing to do for real Connecticut residents.

I support expanding HUSKY to all regardless of age and immigration status, and I ask the committee to support and pass this legislation.

Thank you for your time,  
Jeremy Williams